



## King County

Department of  
Community and Human Services

**Office of Public Defense**

Chinook Building, Suite 550  
401 Fifth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**206-296-7662** Fax 206-296-0587  
TTY Relay 711

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### An Open Letter to Public Defender Employees:

King County and class counsel have settled the *Dolan v. King County* lawsuit. The settlement agreement is subject to approval by the Metropolitan King County Council and the Superior Court. One term of the settlement agreement is that when the current contracts with public defense providers expire on June 30, 2013, employees of the providers will become employees of King County.

### Our Values

With change there is both opportunity and uncertainty. We want to assure you that we in King County government share your values in keeping the County's public defense system a nationally recognized model for safeguarding the rights of individuals and promoting equity and fairness in a balanced justice system.

King County highly respects the experience, knowledge, and commitment to quality that you provide in delivering public defense services. No matter what comes next, we know that King County's values will remain the same, and that King County will remain a leader in establishing caseload standards and ensuring a public defense model that funds investigators, social workers, paralegals, and other support staff.

These are our values that we believe you also share:

- King County's long-standing commitment to high-quality public defense services.
- King County's support for public defender salary parity with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.
- King County's continued use of caseload standards.

### Shaping the Future

We know you have many questions about the ways in which the system might be restructured and how your individual role and responsibilities within the system might change. King County is committed to open lines of communication and to seeking your



input throughout any transition. Your skills, talents and dedication to a quality public defense system will be critical to any transition planning.

As we move forward with the transition, a number of work groups will be formed to hear your input and ideas on specific issues like performance measurement, best practices, a uniform case-management model, training and professional development, space planning, and more.

We remain aware that three of the four defender agencies' employees are represented by SEIU. We have opened a dialogue with SEIU to work through the issues involved in this period of transition. We have also opened a dialogue with the managers and employees of the Associated Counsel for the Accused.

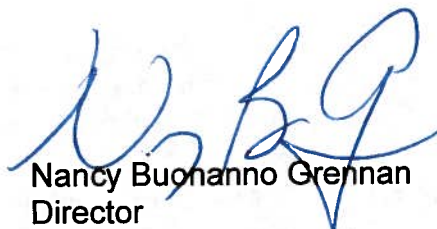
We know you have questions about what the County offers generally to employees by way of benefits, salaries and other employment issues; staff in the County's Human Resources Division (HRD) will be ready to assist you beginning in January. In the interim, information describing current benefits for King County employees, both represented staff and non-represented staff, is available at [www.kingcounty.gov/employees/HumanResources.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/employees/HumanResources.aspx).

Our shared commitment to the public and to public defense clients will guide us as we move forward through this process. Today, we simply want to assure you that King County values your years of service and the breadth of knowledge and experience you bring to public defense. We ask that you share that knowledge as we move forward to shape the future of continued strong public defense system in King County.

Sincerely,



Dave Chapman  
Director  
King County Office of Public Defense



Nancy Buohanno Grennan  
Director  
King County Human Resources Division